

abuse, and the social and emotional isolation that often accompanies it, can leave lasting emotional scars.

And too many schools have a culture that fosters and sustains a hostile environment for these youth. Surveys indicate that the average high school student hears 25 anti-gay slurs daily; 97 percent of high school students regularly hear homophobic remarks. Even more alarming are the results of GLSEN's most recent National School Climate Survey, which found that 84 percent of LGBT students had suffered some form of abuse and 82.9 percent of these reported that adults never or rarely intervened when present. It is unsurprising that such a pervasive atmosphere of harassment takes its toll. LGBT students are far more likely to skip classes, drop out of school and, most disturbingly, attempt suicide.

According to numerous studies, LGBT teens are 2 to 3 times more likely to attempt suicide. Such statistics are a sobering reminder that we must redouble our efforts to provide our children with safe and secure learning environments. No student should be harassed or attacked simply because they are perceived as different, or because they have had the courage to openly acknowledge their sexual orientation.

Through their actions, the student organizers and participants of the Day of Silence set an example for their peers and their elders alike. Their silence has spoken volumes about the need for us to recognize the corrosive climate of fear and intimidation that any kind of bullying creates. Our schools should be havens for learning and personal growth, not arenas for conflict and harassment. For their courage, their compassion, and their tenacity, I honor all those who took this vow of silence today.

TRIBUTE TO DR. SHIRLEY JACKSON,
PRESIDENT OF
RENSSELAER POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE

HON. JOHN W. OLVER

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 13, 2005

Mr. OLVER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the educational leadership of Dr. Shirley Jackson. As university president, Dr. Jackson has helped shape Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, RPI, into one of the premier technological universities in the world.

A key aspect of Dr. Jackson's effort was the establishment of the "Rensselaer Plan," a collaborative roadmap joining together faculty, staff, students and alumni in an effort to make RPI an academic mecca within the Northeast region. During her tenure, she has increased the level of educational services the university can provide students in part by securing a \$360 million unrestricted gift to RPI, one of the largest single gifts ever given to an American university, and by doubling annual fundraising in the last 3 years.

The influx of new financial resources during Dr. Jackson's tenure has spurred the new construction of state-of-the-art research facilities, including the Center for Biotechnology and Interdisciplinary Studies and the Experimental Media and Performing Arts Center. These construction projects have cor-

responded with increases in National Institute of Health, NIH, research funding from \$400,000 in 1999 to \$30 million in 2004. These increases have allowed the university to hire over 100 new faculty members and expand research activities. Students benefit from these first class facilities and improved student-to-faculty ratio while having the opportunity to be involved in cutting edge research.

Again, I commend Dr. Shirley Jackson for her remarkable accomplishments in keeping RPI, my alma mater, a top-tier technological university.

HONORING THE CONTRIBUTIONS
OF PEARSALL CITY COUNCILMAN
CONRAD CARRASCO, JR.

HON. HENRY CUELLAR

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 13, 2005

Mr. CUELLAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the distinguished public service of Pearsall City Councilman Conrad D. Carrasco, Jr.

Conrad Carrasco has long been an established part of Frio County's legal community. He entered public service in 1980, and served as Justice of the Peace for Precinct No. 3 through 1990. The Justice of the Peace is the judicial officer who works most closely with average citizens, and Mr. Carrasco's duties included the issuance of warrants and the settlement of small claims disputes between citizens. In this role, as in his other roles, Conrad Carrasco served the people of Frio County with distinction.

He was elected to the City Council of Pearsall in May, 2000. Mr. Carrasco has worked while on the council to safeguard Frio County's natural beauty and to ensure that the city is run in an accountable and effective manner. He serves in Place No. 3 on the Council, for a term that extends through May 2006.

Finally, he has distinguished himself as a businessman. He has been employed with KBJ's Loan Company since 1995, and continues to be a valuable part of his community's financial sector.

Conrad Carrasco has accumulated an impressive record of success in business and service to the people of Frio County. He is an important resource for his community, and I am proud to have had this opportunity to thank him.

INTRODUCTION OF THE NATIONAL
INVASIVE SPECIES COUNCIL ACT

HON. VERNON J. EHLERS

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 13, 2005

Mr. EHLERS. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing legislation to codify the Executive Order that established the Invasive Species Council and gave the Council responsibility for coordinating all invasive species activities across the federal government (Executive Order #13112, issued in February 1999). Invasive species, such as the snakehead fish and zebra mussel, cause an enormous eco-

nomc, ecological and human health toll on the United States every year. There are over 20 different federal agencies involved in prevention, eradication, control, monitoring, research and outreach efforts to deal with the threat of invasive species, and this Executive effort seeks to make these efforts more coordinated, effective and cost-efficient. Better management of invasive species efforts across federal agencies is critical to an effective response to this threat, and the Executive Order was the right first step. However, it is only the first step. Congress now needs to pass this legislation to give the Council more authority to effectively meet this threat.

Since its inception, the Council has made progress in achieving its mandate. In particular, in January 2001 the Council issued the National Management Plan to provide a general blueprint of goals and actions for federal agencies to better deal with invasive species. While this broad plan lacks detail in some areas, it helps focus the various federal efforts on common goals and coordinated actions. In addition, the Council established a federal advisory committee consisting of 32 members from a broad array of stakeholders. The advisory committee has met several times in order to provide guidance on the development of the National Management Plan and on federal agency actions regarding invasive species in general.

While the Council has had some success, its authority to coordinate the actions of federal agencies has been limited. The Government Accountability Office (GAO) has recognized this problem, reporting that agencies did not incorporate the components of the National Management Plan into their annual performance plans. In addition, the GAO recommended that the Council study whether or not a lack of legislative authority has hampered its mission. Key agencies of the Council have already recognized this lack of authority as problematic and have supported codification of the Council in testimony before a November 2002 joint hearing of the House Resources and House Science Committees on aquatic invasive species.

The legislation I am introducing today essentially keeps the existing structure of the Council intact, while at the same time it addresses issues raised by the GAO by giving the Council a clear statutory mandate.

First, the legislation maintains the Executive Order's statement of administration policy that federal agencies should not undertake actions that may lead to the introduction or further spread of invasive species without careful consideration of the costs that the proposed action may cause. The legislation requires that the Council on Environmental Quality, in conjunction with the Council, issue guidelines for federal agencies to help them consider the consequences of any proposed action. The intent of this provision is to create a common set of guidelines by which all federal agencies can measure their actions, not to give individuals a private right of action against government agencies that take actions regarding invasive species.

Second, the legislation makes some modifications to the existing institutional structure of the Council. The membership of the Council will remain the same; however the legislation updates the membership, as described by the Executive Order, to reflect additional agencies that have been added since 1999. It also

makes the Council an independent entity within the Executive Branch, to be chaired on a rotating basis by the Secretary of the Interior, the Secretary of Agriculture, and the Secretary of Commerce. This is a change from the Executive Order, which called for the Council to be housed within the Department of the Interior and chaired by that agency. If the Council is to be a truly independent entity that can work with all federal agencies, this change is necessary.

Third, the legislation retains the duties of the Council as described by the Executive Order (including development of an updated National Management Plan), but it adds some new duties in order to give the Council more tools to use in coordinating federal programs. In particular, the Council must submit an annual list of the top priorities in several different areas related to addressing the threat posed by invasive species. The legislation also specifically calls upon the Council to work with federal agencies during the budget development and submission process in order to ensure that budget priorities reflect the priorities of the National Management Plan. The legislation also calls on the Office of Management and Budget to develop a crosscut budget of all invasive species efforts in the federal government. This is a necessary tool for the Council to coordinate efforts among the various federal agencies.

Finally, the legislation retains the existing Invasive Species Advisory Council to serve as an important contributor to the ongoing dialogue between the federal government and stakeholders to ensure that the federal government acts in the most effective way.

This legislation will help further the federal government's efforts to combat invasive species, and I urge all of my colleagues to co-sponsor this important legislation.

HONORING PETALUMA BRANCH OF THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN

HON. LYNN C. WOOLSEY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 13, 2005

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Petaluma Branch of the American Association of University Women for 50 years of community service. AAUW Petaluma has tirelessly advocated for equity for women and girls, lifelong education, and positive societal change. With over 200 members, AAUW Petaluma has developed a variety of successful methods to promote their agenda.

In recent years, the AAUW Petaluma has been awarded the Silver, Gold and Platinum awards for excellence in recruitment, program content, success of their projects, and their overall positive energy by AAUW National.

Many of the programs sponsored by AAUW Petaluma are integral in bringing our community together. For example, mentoring and tutoring programs in the high schools involving adults and peers have helped build intergenerational relationships, and the All-Petaluma Schools Community Art Show and Art Train Docents have helped keep art programs alive in the community.

AAUW Petaluma's community involvement does not stop there. The group has organized

community forums on health and planning issues. They exemplify an organization truly giving back to the community. In fact, I recently had the privilege of attending a developing relationships and connections event.

Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to honor the American Association of University Women, Petaluma Branch as an organization that has for the past half-century contributed to the women, girls and community of Petaluma.

THANKING MR. ART NASH FOR HIS SERVICE TO THE HOUSE

HON. ROBERT W. NEY

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 13, 2005

Mr. NEY. Mr. Speaker, on the occasion of his retirement in March of 2005, we rise to thank Mr. Art Nash for 26 years of outstanding service to the United States government, with the majority of it here in the U.S. House of Representatives.

Art began his government career in 1967 as a soldier in the U.S. Army where he was trained as an electronics technician and served two years. After 10 years in the private sector he began his House career at the House Recording Studio's engineering department in 1980. For the next 24 years, Art has been an indispensable member of the television floor coverage crew, the Recording Studio tape room and maintenance shop.

Art has been described as a man of God who loves all people. His positive attitude has been his trademark and the term "detail man" best describes him. He has been an excellent teacher to his co-workers and all those around him. He has taken his time to do the job right or find an even better way. Service has been his greatest achievement. Whether it was during the long hours that the House was in session or working side by side with his co-workers, Art Nash has given his best.

On behalf of the entire House community, we extend congratulations to Art for his many years of dedication and outstanding contributions to the U.S. House of Representatives. We wish him many wonderful years in fulfilling his retirement dreams.

HONORING THE DEDICATION OF ATASCOSA COUNTY APPRAISER EDDIE BRIDGE

HON. HENRY CUELLAR

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 13, 2005

Mr. CUELLAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the important contributions of Atascosa County Appraiser Eddie Bridge.

Eddie Bridge is a hard working member of our community, helping to appraise real estate and personal property in Bee, Crane, Crockett, and Refugio Counties. He also spends his time consulting and assisting the staff members of Frio, Hall, Irion, Martin, Menard, and Starr Counties in both physical and statistical reappraisals. Starting off as a Valuation Consultant with Pritchard and Abbot in 1993, Mr. Bridge has many years of experience in his special line of work.

Mr. Bridge is a model of energy and commitment, often working from eight in the morning till nine in the evening. Despite his demanding schedule, Mr. Bridge still finds time for ranching and running cattle.

Eddie Bridge lives in Pettus with his wife of 24 years and his two children. Both of his children are Valedictorians and his son Edward II serves at the Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, Colorado.

Our Nation is built upon the hard work and dedication of citizens like Eddie Bridge, and it is important to recognize the value of their daily contributions to both town and country.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to have this opportunity to recognize the contributions of Atascosa County Appraiser Eddie Bridge.

HONORING OUR NATION'S YOUTH ON THE 10TH ANNUAL KICK BUTTS DAY, AN ANNUAL CELEBRATION OF YOUTH LEADERSHIP IN THE FIGHT AGAINST TOBACCO

HON. MARTIN T. MEEHAN

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 13, 2005

Mr. MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor our nation's youth today on the 10th annual Kick Butts Day, an annual celebration of youth leadership and activism in the fight against tobacco use.

Over the past 10 years, our nation has made significant progress in reducing youth smoking rates. Young people themselves have played a major role in this success. We should be proud that we've reduced smoking rates among high school students by 40 percent since 1997, when smoking rates among youths peaked at an alarming 36.4 percent.

But we have more work to do. About 22 percent of high school students still smoke. Tobacco is still the leading preventable cause of death in our country, killing more than 400,000 people every year. On Kick Butts Day, we should commit to finishing the job of protecting our kids from tobacco addiction by supporting science-based tobacco prevention measures, strong deterrents to youth smoking, well-funded tobacco prevention and cessation programs, smoke-free air laws, and FDA authority over tobacco products and marketing.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to insert in the RECORD the attached report by the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids entitled "Ten Years of Kicking Butts: Reducing Youth Smoking in the United States." It is a valuable summary of the progress we have made in reducing youth smoking, the evidence that common sense solutions work, and the need still to redouble our efforts.

TEN YEARS OF KICKING BUTTS: REDUCING YOUTH SMOKING IN THE UNITED STATES—KICK BUTTS DAY 10TH ANNIVERSARY REPORT

On May 7, 1996, the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids held the first annual Kick Butts Day to focus the nation's attention on the serious and growing problem of youth tobacco use in our country. At that time, youth smoking rates had been rising alarmingly for several years, fueled by cigarette marketing campaigns such as Joe Camel and the Marlboro Man that appealed to youth and deep price cuts that made cigarettes more affordable to kids. In 1997, smoking